

"Mistress Mary" Is Striking Success; Honors of Charming Pastoral Opera Shared by Cast And Chorus; Appreciative Audience Is Present



Village Maid group in "Mistress Mary." These charmingly-costumed maids are one of the features of the performance. In the group are: Misses Dorothy Peacock, Elizabeth Wall, Marian Stodart, Louise Girvin, Lani Tinker, Margaret Tinker, Maude Neal, Bernice Jaeger, Margaret Sayres, Margaret Paris, Watkins Florence White.—Photo by A. R. Gurrey, Jr.

SPRITELY MAIDS AND GAY SWAINS JOIN IN HAPPY VALLEY FARMING

And: "Mistress Mary" and Her Little Lambs, the Sprites and the Magistrates and Frogs, They All are Joyous

By ELSA CROSS HOWARD.

Miss Margaret R. Martin has beyond a doubt completely shattered the old-time masculine theory that the fair sex is incapable of producing anything worth while in the musical or dramatic line. Her creation "Mistress Mary" is one of the happiest and most ideal of fairy operas. To use a stereotyped phrase, there is literally not one dull moment from the time its compact overture begins until the last refrain of "Love! Love! Love!"

The production of the opera has been the most popular topic of discussion for the past four weeks, during which period rehearsals have been going steadily on; night after night the lights of the Castle Kindergarten, where most of the rehearsals took place, have still been unextinguished even at 11 o'clock, for the indefatigable producer has lived from early morning till late at night solely for one idea, to make her production a success. No effort has seemed too much to make, and even at the conclusion of the heaviest day's work there has been always a cheery smile of appreciation for members of the cast when goodnights were exchanged. Miss Martin has undoubtedly earned the hearty congratulations of her audience and the inexpressible gratitude of the authorities of the Free Kindergarten and Children's Aid Association. The whole cast of the opera, all the members of the orchestra, committee officers, chaperones and ushers, have most generously given their services free for this charitable cause, and when it is realized that these include professionals of many kinds, as well as teachers, students and school children who have had to continue their regular work and give over most of their spare time for the opera, it will be seen that it is not a point to be dismissed lightly, for it has meant sacrifice of the best hours and play hours, parties and favorite pastimes, and placed in their stead hours of shopping or sewing on the pretty costumes, or rehearsing dances or choruses, or going into the chaos of details to straighten things out and put them in running order so that the several committees might achieve effective work—all this and so much more that we can but dimly guess at, who peep behind the scenes, has gone to make the success of the most successful amateur show of the season in Honolulu, and which in its turn stands for the success of the splendid organizations for which it is being given. It is safe to say that no worthier cause could be found than that of starting the youth of our future citizens in the right direction, which free education and the best of it undoubtedly means.

To revert to the music, the plot, the words and the dramatic climaxes and to do full justice to the composer and writer would need a whole newspaper to describe with faithfulness, for it is a most perfectly worked out story and each number in itself is so worthy of praise that it is almost an impossible task.

In the following criticism the plot of the opera has been given from the synopsis contained in the program, and as nearly as possible in the same words:



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"MISTRESS MARY."

ACT I.

Time—Afternoon of the day before the Blue County Sheep Show. Place—Meadow adjoining the homestead of the Happy Valley Farm.

Happy Valley Farm is owned by Madam Blue (Miss Helen Alexander), and managed by her son, Boy Blue (Mr. Reynold McGrew), who is a progressive rancher more or less envied for his great success in sheep raising. He is in love with Mistress Mary (Mrs. Riley H. Allen), his head shepherdess, who is also his adopted sister, having been found by him. Blue when a baby, apparently a nameless waif.

The curtain rises on a group of shepherds who are refreshing themselves at a spring near the homestead. The opening chorus, "We're Awfully Hygienic," is well balanced and full-toned. The music is irresistible and the gay red and white costumes of the lads and lasses with their silver cups make an altogether attractive picture. Suddenly the postman (Mr. Alapaki Smith) arrives and in a lively and amusing song tells them why "It takes a man of genius to be a postman." He exchanges gossip with them, distributes the mail, and Boy Blue disperses them to the various duties of preparing for the Blue County Sheep Show, which is to be held at the farm the next day. Left alone he soliloquizes about Mary, and his hopes and fears take a turnful utterance in the form of the opera, "Ah, love, if I only knew." Mr. Reynold McGrew makes an ideal Boy Blue, and the rare quality of his fine baritone voice and his perfect intonation gives pleasure to every lover of music. His dramatic talents also are not lacking in any degree of excellence.

Mrs. Riley Allen, as Mistress Mary, is the veritable incarnation of a dainty Watteau shepherdess. Her voice has developed wonderfully during the past year which she has spent studying in the East and its true, sweet quality is eminently suited to the title role which she takes with sprightly vivacity and assurance. Immediately following her entrance she joins Boy Blue in a charming little duet and duet, after which he gives her her letter. She finds, upon reading it, that it tells her of her parentage and inheritance of a large fortune, and then Boy Blue and will not let him see it. She declares she will go away and take little Willie, her pet lamb, to school with her. The shepherd maids, however, point out to her the impossibility of such a step in their chorus, "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Their soft, sweet singing forms a distinct contrast to the hearty exuberance of the shepherd's chorus, and their quaint, panned costumes of flower-er muslin lend to them an old-world air which is truly delightful. Little Willie (Master Ivan Johnson), who is, of course, Mary's pet lamb, dances while the shepherd maids sing with remarkable grace for such a wee lambkin, and his attractive little bleat, to quote popular opinion, is "as cute as it can be."

The entrance of Madam Blue (and her daughter, Betty (Mrs. G. M. Robertson), and her friend, Merrie Bell (Mrs. F. P. Reynolds), affords opportunity for the sextette a dance which is given by the three girls and the three rivals of Boy Blue, Tom, the "black sheep" (Mr. L. Young Corbthers), owner of Black Sheep Ranch, and a jealous rival of Boy Blue in the sheep industry, who, with Dick and Harry (Mr. John F. Stone and Mr. Albert Horner), managers of Primrose Farm, call to enter their sheep for the county show. Boy Blue calls a final rehearsal of his trained lambs, whose performances are the wonder of the country. Here a word must be said about the clever acting of the lambs. They never forget for a moment the responsibility that rests upon them for, of course, from beginning to end they are the heroes of the opera

—led by Willie." The "dress rehearsal" proves an utter failure and the curtain descends upon the dramatic finale, "Oh, dear, whatever shall we do?" which is a perfect hurricane of despair. Madam Blue distinguishes herself by her energy and thoroughness and her emphatic expressions provoke much mirth; in each new role one says of Miss Helen Alexander, "surely this is the best she has ever done!"

Mrs. A. G. M. Robertson is charming as Betty Blue and her singing is as sweet as ever. Mrs. F. P. Reynolds, as Merrie Bell, has confirmed the belief of her friends that she has unusual dramatic talent as well as a beautiful voice.

The parts of Munnie and Sallie, the head shepherdesses, were very well taken by Miss Clemence Gifford and Miss Evelyn Cunningham, and that of Tony equally effectively by Mr. L. P. Warner.

ACT II.

Scene—A forest on Happy Valley Farm at midnight. Before the curtain rises the slow, sweet music of the Serenade is played on the violin by John Gifford, whose talent is always so satisfying to listen to. He plays too seldom in public, and on those few occasions one always feels that the chosen solo is much too short.

Mistress Mary, clad in the daintiest of pink negligee with a captivating little cap of similar shade almost hiding her fair curls, has come to the fearsome forest.

The curtain rises on the forest scene and the Will-o'-the-Wisps, led by Gossamer (Miss Nora Swamy), dance in and out among the trees, flashing their lanterns about. It is the prettiest ballet imaginable, the shadowy costumes of black are decorated with silver which flashes even as the lamps of the spirits as they wave their white arms in the gloom and occasionally light up their fair faces with their mysterious flashes of light. They disappear and in come the Frogs—great green hopping monsters, who creak in chorus in a wonderful manner and finally break up with a jolly game of leap frog and disappear even as the Will-o'-the-Wisps. Mary comes down out of an old hollow tree, where she has been hiding, and tells her dream and its strange warning. Again she hears a strain of Boy Blue's song and seems to realize her love for him now that he is threatened with some unknown catastrophe. A graceful scarf-dance follows her singing of "Who can it be?" a light and rhythmic solo, to which Mr. Owl adds an obbligato. Hearing approaching steps she hides again and the three villains Tom, Dick and Harry, enter and discuss their wicked plot to drug Boy Blue's performing lambs with the aid of the masked man, who rehearses with them a beautiful, unaccompanied four-part serenade, which they are to sing in the event of being caught. Then they go to perform their wicked deed, and Mary is distressed until Silverwings, with her darling little fairies, appears and gives her a magic censor which will revive the lambs at the proper time. The solo and chorus, "Troubles are only bubbles of woe," sung by Miss Helen Spaulding and her fairies is one of the prettiest things in the opera. Miss Spaulding's sweet voice is just perfect for the part of the consoling fairy queen, and the dance upon which the curtain descends is a vision of dainty, happy fairies, whose dresses are lovely fairy creations of white and silver which baffle description, but look like moonshine and mist.

Mr. Corbthers and his two able assistants, Mr. Stone and Mr. Horner, introduce the more somber element of villainy with great skill, mingling it with so much of the grotesque that it is impossible not to see the humorous side of it, which is just as it should be, since the wrongs of the world are only ones on which we have the pleasure of displaying the rights of life, or, as Silverwings sings: "Troubles are only bubbles of woe."

A-flicating in the air; Just a little magic touch And, lo, they disappear.

If you'd happy be, just know That troubles are bubbles of woe."

The part of the Masked Man was appropriately done by Mr. C. J. Birnie. Special Feature Not Given.

Owing to a severe cold Mrs. A. G. M. Robertson was obliged to disappoint

her audience, being unable to sing her scheduled solo.

ACT III.

Scene—The upper meadow, en fête (the morning of the county show.)

Boy Blue, tired out with the night's watch, has fallen asleep against a haystack. Mary, Betty and Merrie Bell serenade him with the softest and sweetest of morning serenades and at the same time tickle his face with straws until he at last awakens and tries to catch his fair tormentors who, however, escape him one by one. So he starts home for breakfast but is met by the weeping Shepherd Maids, who tell him that the Trained Lambs are in a deadly stupor from which nothing can arouse them, and Boy Blue returns with them to the fold to see if matters are really as serious as the sobbing maids seem to think.

The Peddlers come dancing in, clad in the smartest green and white costumes and they sing and dance the popular "Pink Lemonade" chorus with neatness and despatch. They have scarcely found their places behind their booths when the village maids enter daintily clad in yellow and white, and they dance a jolly old English Morris dance. Following them come the shepherd lads and lasses who also dance an old folk dance, beating time with beribboned sticks and executing the energetic steps with ease and precision.

These two last dances are old English and date from about the 16th century. Then enters the guardian (Mr. Lawrence Judd) and the magistrates, a motley chorus composed of quaint characters, who sing a lusty song entitled, "We are Magistrates," at the conclusion of which, to prove their willingness to be "just boys again with never a care," they dance with the prettiest shepherdesses while the entire chorus sings "Tis the Day of All Days," an ensemble in waltz tempo that has a fine rhythmic swing throughout.

Boy Blue at length returns and announces to all assembled the tragedy which has befallen his sheep. Here the bad villains chuckle to themselves, but Merrie Bell and the others beseech him to try to rouse them. He sends for them but in vain; the poor lambskins only snore and lay round in a deep sleep. Just then Mistress Mary arrives and with the wonderful fairy censor given to her by Silverwings, removes the spell of the drug and the good little lambs so splendidly through their cute tricks. Mary then reveals the conspiracy and the rival shepherds Tom, Dick and Harry are disgraced. Betty and Merrie Bell plead for them and they are forgiven. Then the guardian, who has meanwhile been carrying on a strong flirtation with the coquettish Madam Blue, announces the discovery of Mary's name and good fortune and Mary very prettily begs to stay with her guardian. He is only too glad of the excuse to stay and Mary gives her hands to Boy Blue and the final curtain descends on a happy throng swaying to the haunting refrain of "Love! Love! Love!" and, of course, they all live "happy ever after," even as the pretty opera will live in the memories of those who have taken part and those who have only listened and enjoyed it.

The opera is in three acts, and during the performances some special features will be given. These are:

Following is the full cast for "Mistress Mary":

Mistress Mary, head shepherdess of Happy Valley farm, of unknown parentage, adopted by Madam Blue—Mrs. Riley H. Allen.

Madam Blue dignified and helpful—Miss Helen Alexander.

Boy Blue, manager of Happy Valley farm and very up-to-date in methods

An eminent Scotch astronomer once explained in a lecture that a certain star looked no bigger than a three penny bit a hundred miles away. After the discourse one of the audiences said to him: "I know you for a Scotsman, for no one but a Scotsman would trouble about a 3 penny bit a hundred miles off."

Grandmother—"Oh, Thomas, Thomas! How can you be all the time fishing?" Thomas—"Why, 'cause I keep in training, of course! If you want me to I can put you into just as good physical condition as I am in thirty days."—Puck.



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—Mr. Reynold McGrew. Betty Blue, the spoiled daughter of the house who "likes villains"—Mrs. Alexander G. M. Robertson. Merrie Bell, a friend of Betty's, visiting the farm, and as merry a little beauty as her name implies—Mrs. F. P. Reynolds.

The Postman "F. R. D. 23," a man of brains—Mr. Alapaki Smith. Silverwings, queen of the fairies—Miss Helen Spaulding.

Gossamer, leader of the ballet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps—Miss Nora Swamy. The Guardian—Mr. Lawrence Judd. Sally—Miss Evelyn Cunningham, Tuesday; Miss Betty Case, Wednesday. Minnie—Miss Clemence Gifford, Tuesday; Miss Ruth Soper, Wednesday. Tony—Mr. Warner.

Shepherd—Mr. Percy Deverill. Tom, called the Black Sheep, owner of Black Sheep ranch and a rival of Boy Blue in business and in love—Mr. L. Young Corbthers.

Dick, in love with Betty—Mr. John Stone.

Harry, in love with Merrie Bell—Mr. Albert Horner, Jr.

Tom, Dick and Harry are the owners of Primrose Farm and would be villains. Masked Man—Mr. C. J. Birnie.

Sallie, Shepherdess—Miss Evelyn Cunningham, for Tuesday; Miss Betty Case for Wednesday.

Willie, Mary's Pet Lamb—Master Ivan Johnson.

Tony—Mr. L. P. Warner. The Shepherdesses—Misses Rosie Louise Girvin, Lani Tinker, Margaret

Herbert, Pauline, Schaefer, Betty Case, Clemence Gifford, Fannie Hoegs, Bernice Halstead, Marian Dean, Evelyn Cunningham, Ruth Soper, Thelma Murphy, Marian Chapin, Bertha Kopke, Mrs. Warner, Mrs. John Erdman. Shepherds—Messrs. Warner, Albert Bush, A. Brown, Charles Herbert, Smith, Raseman, Sam Carter, John Gifford, W. Noble, Bull, French, Hough, A. Hough, Collins.

Chaperones for shepherds and shepherdesses—Mrs. Clarence Edwards, Mrs. Jerome Pillow.

Will o' the Wisps Ballet—Miss Nora Swamy, leader; Misses Nora Sturgeon, Henrietta Smith, Mildred Bromwell, Helen Center, Doris Noble, Hazel Buckland, Elizabeth Woods, Ruth McCasney.

Chaperone—Mrs. Agnes P. Driver. Pink Lemonade Chorus—Misses Mildred Chapin, Dorothy Wood, Kathleen Rutman, Ida Logan, Dorothy Winter, Bernice Kahanamoku, Iola Logan, Charlotte Blake, Sybil Carter, Gertrude Blake.

Chaperones—Mrs. Bromwell and Mrs. C. Cruikshank.

Shepherd Maids—Misses Winnifred Brown, Ynez Gibson, Elizabeth Hobdy, Marian Paris, Margaret Young, Ruth Brown, Rachael Woods, Ilma Woods, Helen Dow, Peggy Campbell, Mildred Ayers, Dorothy Hawk.

Chaperones—Mrs. Raymond Brown, Mrs. Isaac Cox.

Village Maids—Misses Dorothy Peacock, Elizabeth Wall, Marian Stodart, Louise Girvin, Lani Tinker, Margaret

Tinker, Maude, Neal, Bernice Jaeger, Margaret Sayres, Margaret Paris, Watkins.

Chaperones—Mrs. Benjamin Marx, Mrs. W. A. Wall.

Committee of Judges—Messrs. Livingston, Furer, King, Brewer, French, Chaperon—Mrs. Wells Peterson.

Frogs—Bailey Sayres, Corwin Sayres, Fred Bush, Jack Cooper, Sonny Peters, Nelson Nowell, Newton Peck, Jack Walker, Eric Danford, Gordon Smith.

Chaperones—Mrs. Carl du Roi, Mrs. Ismay Stubbs.

Lambs—Little Willy, Ivan Johnson; Teddy R. Herbert Mercer; Fluffy Rufles, Wilson Boyd; Toodles, Richard Parker; Tiddlewinks, Robert Janda; Mignonette, Roderick Matheson, Jr.; Billiekins, George Kimball; Clover Blossom, Arthur Brown.

Assisting as underlings are Norris Harbold, Freddie Beers, Widemann, Brunie.

Fairies—Leader, Miss Helen Spaulding; Margaret Dyer, Juliette Carpenter, Kathleen Stone, Eleanor Watson, Gwendolyn Gurrey, Frances Cooper, Logan Shepherd, Vesta Quinn, Belli Nowell, Dorothy Curry, Katherine de Forrest, Elsa Peters, E. Vivian Shadinger, Geraldine Locks, Alice Campbell, Margaret Marcellino, Iwaland Jaeger, Paloma Jaeger, Sue Alston McDonald, Jean Angus, Marie Louise Love, Marian Trotter, Miriam Mackall, Loy McCandless, Hazel Samson.

(Continued on page six)

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